

PREPARING FOR SKIN GRAFT REPAIR SURGERY

What to expect - You can expect to have bruising, swelling and drainage from the graft area.

6 WEEKS BEFORE SURGERY

Your surgeon may request abstinence from smoking and all tobacco products 6 weeks before and 6 weeks afterward. Failure to abstain from tobacco may result in your surgery being postponed or canceled as this complicates the healing process.

2 WEEKS BEFORE SURGERY

Medications - Discontinue Aspirin and Aspirin-like products, Ibuprofen (Motrin), Naprosyn (Aleve), Vitamin E tablets and certain herbs like Ginko Bilolba, St. John's Wort, Ephedra. If you take other herbs or vitamins, please phone our office. You may take Tylenol (Acetaminophen) for pain relief at any time.

Pre-admission appointment - must occur prior to surgery, unless otherwise directed by your surgeon.

BEFORE SURGERY

Diet - Do not eat or drink after midnight the evening before surgery, unless otherwise directed by the anesthesiologist.

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

FIRST 24-48 HOURS AFTER SURGERY

- Your greatest discomfort will occur the first 24-48 hours following surgery.
- During this time, take all medication as prescribed. It is helpful to take medication with crackers or toast to avoid nausea which may occur if taken on an empty stomach. Also, if you are given additional prescriptive medication by your surgeon, please take as directed.
- Do not remove dressing over wound.

MEDICATION

- Avoid Aspirin and Aspirin products for 2 weeks after surgery. Tylenol (Acetaminophen) can be taken. Please limit Acetaminophen to 4gm (4000 mg) in a 24 hour period.

DIET

- Eat and drink easily digested foods such as Jell-O, ginger ale soups, etc. These are tolerated well the first 24 hours after surgery. If you are not nauseous you may resume your normal diet.
- Drink plenty of fluids and eat fruit and high fiber foods to avoid constipation.

HYGIENE

- You may shower and wash your hair 24 hours after surgery.
- While taking pain medication always have someone assist you with bathing.

ACTIVITY

- You may or may not apply ice to the graft site.
- Limit your activity to normal daily routine. Avoid strenuous exercise, lifting, pulling or pushing of objects.
- No driving until cleared by the doctor and you have not taken prescriptive pain medication for 24 hours.
- You may want to stay off work for 2-3 days post surgery, or until the soreness has subsided.
- Let pain be the limiting factor. If it hurts, don't do it.
- Check with your doctor before resuming jogging, aerobics or any vigorous exercise.
- Refrain from smoking for 6 weeks as smoking retards the healing process.

WOUND CARE

- You will be instructed where your donor site is located. The clean dressing should be left intact.
- You will be instructed where your graft site is located. Keep this area dry.
- You may want to protect the graft with 4"x4" gauze tape for comfort depending on the location of your site.
- Change the gauze when soiled once or twice (1-2 times) a day.
- If donor site dressing consists of clear plastic sheet, leave dressing undisturbed.
- It is normal for fluid to collect under the plastic. If the fluid begins to leak, remove the dressing and clean the area with soapy water and leave open to air.

NOTIFY YOUR DOCTOR IF

- If pain with swelling and continuous drainage doesn't subside.
- You have a fever of 101 degrees or more which lasts for 24 hours or longer.
- You develop any excessive swelling, redness or warmth of incisions.
- You experience excess pain not responding to prescribed pain medication.
- You develop thick, odorous drainage or bleeding that doesn't subside.

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